

**To:** Williams, Laura[williams.laura@epa.gov]  
**From:** Ostrander, David  
**Sent:** Thur 10/22/2015 10:27:00 PM  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT - Need Q&As for DOI report

**From:** Ostrander, David  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2015 3:59 PM  
**To:** Way, Steven; Griswold, Hays  
**Cc:** Hestmark, Martin  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT - Need Q&As for DOI report

Steve, Hays: Please prepare a response to the questions raised. Keep them focused as much as you can. In responding, please send your message to Bob Ward and attorney client privileged, and copy me, Martin and Laura. I have rewritten some of the questions so they are more accurate and consistent with the report. Please try to get these together early tomorrow as we will likely get HQs version sometime in the morning.

Also, Martin would like a time tomorrow morning when he can reach you. Please send him a message or text when you could have a call. His cell is 303-518-9580.

Thanks

**From:** StClair, Christie  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2015 12:00 PM  
**To:** R8 GKM Leadership Team  
**Cc:** Stalcup, Dana; Grantham, Nancy; Hull, George; Deitz, Randy; Bassler, Rachel; Cohen, Nancy  
**Subject:** URGENT - Need Q&As for DOI report

R8, we are developing Q&As for media inquiries on the DOI report.

Could you please address this question immediately:

1. Could you please respond to the statement “Had it been done (*directly determine the level of the mine pool*), the plan to open the mine would have been revised, and the blowout would not have occurred”. ~~assertion that the blowout would not have occurred had the EPA taken the time to determine the level of the mine pool prior to excavation work at the site?~~ This appears to be in contrast to the EPA’s internal review report ~~prior assertion~~ that the spill was “likely inevitable.”

For the rest of the questions below, please send us draft responses no later than 4pm Eastern. Thanks – I’m at my desk if you want to talk any of these out.

Christie

202-564-2880

2. —What do you say about the report’s finding that EPA “Abandoned mine guidelines and manual provide detailed guidance on environmental sampling, waste characterization, and water treatment, with little appreciation for the engineering complexity of some abandoned mine projects that often require, but do not receive, a significant level of expertise.” ~~did not focus on the engineering factors associated with the mine work, that we focused on the environmental factors?~~ Finding #4 that there was an absence of “Engineering considerations that analyze the geologic and hydrologic conditions in the general area”. What was done to consider engineering considerations?

3. Why did excavation work begin even though the agency project manager wanted BOR input before excavation work started?

4. Why didn’t we use a drill bore to accurately gauge water level? (Was cost the main factor? How were site conditions different at R&B vs GKM?)

5. Why didn’t we incorporate the feedback we got from BOR when we shared our plan from

Red & Bonita (R&B) mine?

6. Why didn't we have a detailed blow-out plan?

7. What specifically was the mining and engineering experience of those responsible for developing the plan, and those on the site at the time of the blow-out?

**Christie St. Clair**

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